



### **The Peregrine Fund**

*Working with Birds to Conserve Nature*



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## **THIRTEEN CALIFORNIA CONDORS TO GO TO GRAND CANYON AREA**

Thirteen California Condors will be transported to a new home on public lands on the Vermilion Cliffs near the Grand Canyon on November 8th, 2000. Seven of the condors (three males and four females) were hatched this year at The Peregrine Fund's breeding facility in Boise and one (female) was hatched last year. Condor 186 which was originally released in 1998 and brought back into captivity due to his attraction to humans will be re-released. Also, two pairs of adult condors (hatched in California in 1991 and 1992) will be released with the hope they will start breeding in the wild. These are the first paired condors of breeding age to be released into the wild.

The condors will be transported from Boise, Idaho to Marble Canyon, Arizona on a U.S. Forest Service Twin Otter plane. From Marble Canyon, they will be taken to the specially designed release aviary on the Vermilion Cliffs. After a four to six-week period of acclimation, the condors will be released to the wild. This release will increase the population of California Condors in the Grand Canyon area from 15 to 28.

"After four years of releases, we feel we are on the brink of condors breeding in the wild in Arizona," stated Dr. William A. Burnham, President of The Peregrine Fund. "The two adult pairs of condors are of breeding age and hopefully will encourage more pair bonding between the younger condors," finished Burnham.

The historic Arizona release is a joint project between The Peregrine Fund, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Arizona Game and Fish, National Park Service, CORE, and numerous other partners. The Peregrine Fund, a non-profit conservation organization headquartered in Boise, Idaho, is funding and conducting the release; BLM is managing the habitat; the USFWS is responsible for the overall recovery of the species; and the Arizona Game and Fish is responsible for all wildlife in Arizona. Regular updates are being provided by biologists on The Peregrine Fund's home page (<http://www.peregrinefund.org>).

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The California Condors are being released as an “non-essential/experimental population” under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. Section 10(j) provides that the species can be released in an area without impacting current or future land use planning. This authority has been spelled out further in an innovative agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and local governments. This "Implementation Agreement" spells out a positive working relationship between the Federal government and the various local governments.

There are currently 164 California Condors in the world -- 40 in the wild in California and Arizona and 124 in captive breeding facilities (World Center for Birds of Prey, Zoological Society of San Diego, and Los Angeles Zoo).

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*Focusing on birds to conserve nature*

WORLD CENTER FOR BIRDS OF PREY

November 6, 2000

## CALIFORNIA CONDOR FACT SHEET

- NAME:** California Condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*)
- WEIGHT:** 20 to 24 pounds
- WINGSPAN:** Up to 9.5 feet (3 meters)
- BODY LENGTH:** 46 to 55 inches
- VOICE:** None, but may grunt or wheeze
- NEST SITE:** Usually a cave in a cliff or a crevice among boulders on a steep slope.
- INCUBATION PERIOD:** About 56 days for egg to hatch.
- FOOD SUPPLY:** Historically, carcasses of bison, elk or deer in inland areas and seals and beached whales along coasts. With the loss of wild game and the introduction of cattle and sheep, the condor changed to feeding on carcasses of domestic animals. Has ability to travel 150 miles a day in search of food.
- RANGE:** Occurred historically from British Columbia south to northern Baja California and in other parts of southwestern United States.
- POPULATION:** There are currently 164 California Condors in the world -- 40 in the wild in California and Arizona and 124 in captive breeding facilities (World Center for Birds of Prey, Zoological Society of San Diego, and Los Angeles Zoo).
- REPRODUCTION:** Usually one egg every other year in the wild.  
Up to three eggs per year in captivity.
- CAUSE OF DECLINE:** Shooting, poisoning, and loss of food supply and habitat.